

the Senator from Iowa. My expectation is that the Coast Guard study and report will include the consideration of the specific needs of individuals with disabilities with respect to their use of survival craft, and will not make any recommendations that could be considered discriminatory against people with disabilities, or require individuals with disabilities to perform actions which they may be unable to do as a result of their specific disability. The goal of the study and report should be an inclusive one which allows people with disabilities to participate fully in the underlying activity, and provides a full and equal opportunity for each person with a disability to utilize these survival craft in a safe manner, as necessary. I will continue to work with my colleague from Iowa and the Coast Guard on these issues and I will encourage the Coast Guard to complete their report within the 6 month period so that new requirements will take effect in a timely manner.

Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, I appreciate the efforts of the Senator from West Virginia, the chairman of the Commerce Committee, and I look forward to continuing to work with him to assure that individuals with disabilities have access to survival craft that will properly protect them from injury.

Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Madam President, I rise today to celebrate the final passage of a reconciled Coast Guard authorization bill for fiscal years 2013 and 2014. This achievement is the culmination of several months of careful negotiation between the Senate and the House, and is a tribute to what can happen when we rise above trivial partisanship, roll up our sleeves, and reach across the aisle on behalf of the American people.

The United States Coast Guard is truly unique among the services and agencies of the Federal Government. As a branch of our Armed Forces, it defends the Nation in time of war, but it also functions as a Federal agency with law enforcement and regulatory authority in a number of areas critical to our national security, economic security, and environment. Today, the Coast Guard is charged with 11 statutory missions that include saving lives at sea; protecting our ports, waterways, and maritime infrastructure from terrorists; responding to natural disasters; interdicting drugs and migrants at sea; and protecting our marine environment.

Each and every day, we ask the 42,000 men and women of the Coast Guard to put their lives on the line to carry out these important missions. Over the past few years, we have seen the Coast Guard take the lead in responding to numerous crises like Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy, the earthquake in Haiti, and the BP Deepwater Horizon oil spill. In all of these cases, the Coast Guard has met and exceeded our expectations. We have asked them to do more with less and they have responded. The least we can do is to

make sure they have the tools essential to carrying out their missions successfully. With the passage of this year's Coast Guard reauthorization bill, I believe we're on our way towards meeting that responsibility.

This bipartisan bill authorizes additional funding and personnel levels for the Coast Guard over fiscal years 2013 and 2014, improving its ability to carry out its three overarching roles of maritime security, safety and stewardship successfully. The bill also makes a number of changes to the Coast Guard's major acquisitions authorities critical to the ongoing and needed recapitalization of its aging fleet. Additionally, the bill addresses America's increasing presence in a changing Arctic by ensuring that the Coast Guard maintains and strengthens its capability to conduct polar ice operations in support of its statutory missions and operational needs of the United States Navy. Importantly, the bill also gives the Coast Guard greater parity with its sister Armed Services by further aligning Coast Guard management and personnel authorities with statutory authorities of the Department of Defense to better support its service members and their families.

The bill's passage would not have been successful without the tireless efforts of many here in Congress. I first want to thank Senator BEGICH, who, after assuming the chairmanship of the Oceans Subcommittee at the beginning of this Congress, quickly went to work on drafting the Senate's version of the Coast Guard bill. His legislation, of which I was a proud cosponsor, served as a blueprint for the Senate's negotiations with the House.

I also want to thank my dear friend and ranking member of the Commerce Committee, Senator HUTCHISON. Her efforts were instrumental to moving the ball down the field. It is increasingly difficult to get consensus in this body, particularly for legislation that needs unanimity. Without her efforts to hammer out differences across the aisle, today's achievement would not have been possible. Senator HUTCHISON will be missed.

In recent weeks, much attention was given to the efforts to pass needed reauthorization for the Department of Defense and each of the Armed Services under it. It was a tough slog, but in the end it demonstrated what can be achieved when the Senate works as it should. In its own quiet way, the passage of this legislation for this essential service branch is a testament to that as well.

Mr. BEGICH. I further ask that the Senate immediately proceed to a voice vote on a motion to concur in the House amendment to the Senate amendment to H.R. 2838.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. If there is no further debate, the question is on agreeing to the motion.

The motion was agreed to.

Mr. BEGICH. I further ask that the motion to reconsider be made and laid

upon the table, with no intervening action or debate; and that any statements relating to the measure be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. BEGICH. To conclude, this is the Coast Guard reauthorization bill. It is a bill that has taken a while to work out between all of the parties, but it has incredible value, obviously, for my home State of Alaska and for the Presiding Officer's home State of Washington and for, really, the country to make sure we have the right elements for our Coast Guard. It is very exciting to see it now moves from this side, and we anticipate the House will accept it.

So thank you very much, Madam President. I note the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. COONS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BEGICH). Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTE TO MATTHEW WALKER

Ms. SNOWE. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the outstanding service provided by one of my long-serving staff members, Matthew Walker, to the Small Business Committee, our beloved home State of Maine, and indeed our Nation. Matt is a dedicated individual whose enthusiasm and insights will be sorely missed. As he moves on to the next step in his professional life, I wish him the best and thank him for his years of service.

A native son of Bangor, ME, Matt attended my alma mater, the University of Maine, before earning his Juris Doctor from the Maine School of Law. I first met Matt when he served as an intern in my office in 1994, when I was still a Member of the House of Representatives, and since then he has been an integral part of my staff for nearly 14 years collectively. Among his experiences, he has been a volunteer on my first Senatorial campaign, worked in two of my district offices handling constituent casework, served in my personal office in Washington, and most recently, Matt performed the absolutely crucial role of Deputy Staff Director and Chief Counsel on the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship. From these roles he has gained diverse and invaluable knowledge from many areas, from providing effective constituent services to the people of Maine to drafting and introducing significant legislation. His flexibility and wide range of experience have made him a vital member of my staff. On the Small Business Committee, Matt has been a trusted advisor on a host of legislative issues that have come before the Committee since 2003, as well as shaping the Committee's agenda during my tenure as chair and ranking member.

Anyone who knows Matt can attest to the crucial role service to our Nation plays in his life. A recent retiree from the National Guard and a veteran, Matt served a 1-year tour of duty in Afghanistan in 2006 and 2007. And I certainly gained an even greater sense of what it was like to experience the gratification and honor—as well as trepidation—that service members feel when we saw Master Sergeant Walker deploy. I was so touched when Matt had an American flag fly over Bagram Air Field in Afghanistan for me, and when he sent it to me, I had it framed and displayed in my front office.

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't mention Matt's boundless energy, personable demeanor, and infectious sense of humor. Over the years, I have been truly fortunate to benefit from Matt's indispensable wisdom and thoughtful guidance. I will miss his strong work ethic and cheerful demeanor, which have been nearly constant in my office for so long. Matt's strengths and attributes will serve him well as he moves off the Hill. I wish Matt, his wife Rhonda, and their beautiful children, Riley and Logan, all the best as they begin an exciting new chapter.

NOMINATION OF JOHN DOWDELL

Mr. COBURN. Mr. President, I rise to speak of the confirmation of John Dowdell of Tulsa, OK, to a seat on the District Court for the Northern District of Oklahoma.

Mr. Dowdell is a native of Tulsa and a graduate of Bishop Kelly High School. Mr. Dowdell received his B.A. from Wake Forest University in 1978 and his J.D. from the University of Tulsa College of Law in 1981. Following law school, he served for two years as a law clerk to the Honorable William J. Holloway of the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals. He then joined the firm of Norman & Wohlgemuth as an associate. In 1987, he was promoted to partner and the firm became Norman Wohlgemuth Chandler & Dowdell. Mr. Dowdell's practice areas include complex litigation and appellate work. He has been involved with six cases before the U.S. Supreme Court and has litigated before the Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals on numerous occasions.

In addition to his legal practice, Mr. Dowdell serves as an Adjunct Settlement Judge in the Northern District of Oklahoma. In this capacity he has conducted over 50 mediations on a pro bono basis. He has also performed extensive pro bono work for several criminal appellate cases and his alma mater, Bishop Kelley High School. Additionally, Mr. Dowdell is a member of the Editorial Board of the Oklahoma Bar Association, a former president of the Bishop Kelley High School Board of Directors, and was appointed by the mayor to serve on Tulsa's Public Facilities Board.

Mr. Dowdell has received numerous honors for his legal practice, including being rated as one of Oklahoma's

"Super Lawyers" from 2006 through 2011 and being named a Top Commercial Litigation Lawyer by American Litigation Magazine. He also was the recipient of the Distinguished Service Award of the American Inns of Court in 1993 and the Jack R. Givens Award for Professionalism and Service in 1998. The Oklahoma Bar Association Board of Governors has endorsed Mr. Dowdell's nomination to this judicial position and passed a resolution praising his demeanor, intelligence, and legal skills.

I firmly believe the rule of law is the foundation of our great Nation. By confirming judges of high character and integrity such as Mr. Dowdell, who are committed to the principles established by our Founders, we will ensure our Federal court system continues to dispense fair and predictable justice to all. I thank my colleagues for joining me in supporting John Dowdell's confirmation to the District Court for the Northern District of Oklahoma.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO REBEKAH FORMAN

• Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Rebekah Forman for her hard work as an intern in my Cheyenne office. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Rebekah is a native of Sheridan, WY and a graduate of Sheridan High School. She currently attends Laramie County Community College. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Rebekah for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It is wonderful to have her as part of our team. I am pleased she will be continuing her internship with my office through next semester.●

TRIBUTE TO MARY FREEMAN

• Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Mary Freeman for her hard work as an intern in my Cheyenne office. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Mary is a native of Cheyenne, WY and a graduate of Cheyenne East High School. She currently attends the University of Wyoming College of Law. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Mary for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know

she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her next journey.●

TRIBUTE TO RONALD PALMER

• Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Ronald Palmer for his hard work as an intern in my Casper office. I recognize his efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Ronald is a native of Rawlins, WY and a graduate of Rawlins High School. He currently attends Casper College where he is majoring in theatre performance. He has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made him an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of his work is reflected in his great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Ronald for the dedication he has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have him as part of our team. I know he will have continued success with all of his future endeavors. I wish him all my best on his next journey.●

TRIBUTE TO MARY FRANCES ROONEY

• Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Franci Rooney for her hard work as an intern in my Washington, D.C. office. I recognize her efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Franci is a native of Dallas, TX. She graduated from the University of Notre Dame with a bachelor of arts in philosophy and Spanish. She has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made her an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of her work is reflected in her great efforts over the last several months.

I want to thank Franci for the dedication she has shown while working for me and my staff. It was a pleasure to have her as part of our team. I know she will have continued success with all of her future endeavors. I wish her all my best on her next journey.●

TRIBUTE TO ABRAHAM SCHREIER

• Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I would like to take the opportunity to express my appreciation to Abe Schreier for his hard work as an intern in my Washington, D.C. office. I recognize his efforts and contributions to my office as well as to the State of Wyoming.

Abe is a native of Fort Wayne, IN. He graduated from Indiana University with a bachelor of arts in political science and history. He has demonstrated a strong work ethic, which has made him an invaluable asset to our office. The quality of his work is reflected in his great efforts over the last several months.